

RECEPTION OF MR. WEBSTER.

IMMENSE MEETING AT FANEUIL HALL.
Long before the time arranged for opening the doors of Faneuil Hall, yesterday morning, even while the constables and others were clearing it and arranging the platform, many people came in and took their stand, and at ten o'clock the Hall was nearly full. People from the south as far as Baltimore, were here for the purpose of hearing Mr. Webster, and there were reporters from New York, particularly from the Herald and Tribune. At about half past ten o'clock the Mayor came in, accompanied by a number of friends of Mr. Webster, and some of our most distinguished citizens. We noticed upon the platform and in the Hall, a number of our oldest merchants, Mr. Grattan, the British Consul, Harrison Gray Otis, a number of Clergymen, Messrs. Saltonstall and Cushing, &c. Before eleven o'clock the Hall was filled in every corner, and it seemed as if there would hardly be room for the entrance of the committee and their guests.

The Mayor Mr. Chapman, announced that a number of gentlemen had invited Mr. Webster to meet them at a social entertainment, but that that gentleman had preferred a more public and quite as social mode of meeting them, and that this place had been appointed for the purpose. The Mayor had received a letter, signed by a number of the gentlemen alluded to, asking him to preside at the meeting, which he had consented to do if no objection was made. He then stated that the Committee would arrive at the Hall with Mr. Webster precisely at eleven o'clock. After only a minute or two had elapsed Mr. Webster and his friends arrived, and he was formally introduced to the Mayor by Mr. T. B. Curtis, the Chairman.

The Mayor then addressed him as follows:
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MR. WEBSTER.—I have the honor, sir, to be the organ of this large assembly of your former constituents, and still fellow-citizens and friends, who have gathered to greet you with a cordial welcome upon your visit to what we are proud to call, and trust you will always feel to be—your home. We sought to meet you at a social festival; but it has taken the present far better form at your own request. The pointed meaning, however, of the occasion, is unchanged. Believing that as a true republican, you will find the richest reward of your public services in the respect and gratitude of those whom you serve, we would assure you, in the most emphatic manner, that so far as your friends here are concerned, you have them from the heart. We would assure you, that though your duties, at your country's call, have separated you from us for a season, you are not forgotten—but that wherever your destiny may place you, so long as in times past, you shall be nobly defending your country's Constitution, and maintaining unimpaired her honor, there will be living and beating hearts here, in which you will ever be enshrined.

A large portion, sir, of your mature life, has been spent in the public service—and of that portion, a great part as the immediate representative of this city and Commonwealth. We rejoice in this opportunity to testify to you that your long and eminent services in our behalf, are still held in most grateful remembrance. We acknowledge our deep obligations to you for your unwavering fidelity to our interests—for your able support of that cause of American industry, whose protection has so distinguished the recent session of Congress, and for the broad and comprehensive spirit in which your legislative duties were ever discharged. Bright, sir, ever bright will be the page of history which records the efforts of your commanding intellect in the councils of the nation, and New England—glorious New England—your birth-place and your home—whose heart you know is warm, though her skies be cold—New England, from every summit of her granite hills, will never cease to hail you as her worthy representative.

We parted with you with regret indeed, but still with ready acquiescence in the wise judgment of that good old man, who, himself placed in the Presidential chair, amidst a people's acclamation, from amongst the bright lights of this broad land, selected you to stand at this right hand. It pleased a wise but inscrutable Providence, too soon, alas! to mortal eyes, to remove him from his elevated seat on earth, to we trust, a higher one above. But nobly, sir, have you sustained the momentous interests, which in a most critical period of the country's history, he committed to your charge. No sound, indeed, of his glad voice shall ever again greet your ear. But we feel that his benignant spirit has been and will still be near to bless you, and approve the loud "well done," with which every true patriot must salute you.

It is to your eminent services, sir, on this broad field which you have lately occupied, that we look this day with special pride and admiration. Sir, in simple but heartfelt language, we thank you for the honorable attitude, in which, so far as your department has been concerned, you have placed your country before the world. Would to God that it stood as well in other respects. In the many emergencies in our foreign relations, which the two past years have presented, you have been true throughout to the true interests and honor of the country, and no where in its archives can be found, than those which bear your signature.

When the dark cloud lowered upon our neighboring frontier, when a great and fundamental law of nations had well nigh yielded to popular passion—when a single step intervened between us and a war, that must have been disastrous, as it would have found us in the wrong—it was your wise and energetic interference that dispelled the storm, by seeking to make us just even under galling provocation.

When a gasconading upstart from a neighboring republic, so called, presumed to address to this Government a communication worthy only of his own, but which no one of his coadjutors was bold enough to present in person—one firm and dignified look from our own Secretary of State, a single sweep of his powerful arm, relieved the country from any further specimens of Mexican diplomacy.

And, crowning act of all, when amidst the numerous and perplexing questions, which had so long disturbed the harmony of the two nations whom God meant should always be friends, England sent forth her ambassador of compromise and peace, you met him like a man. Subtle diplomacy and political legerdemain you threw to the winds;—and taking only for your guides simple honesty, common sense, and a Christian spirit, behold, by their magic influence, there is not a cloud in the common heavens above us, but only the glad and cheering sunlight of friendship and peace.

We have already, sir, on this same spot, expressed our satisfaction with this treaty with England, while paying a merited tribute of respect to the distinguished representative of that country, who was associated with you in its adjustment. We repeat to you our satisfaction with the result, and with the magnanimous spirit by which it was accomplished. We may add now, as we might not then, that we know not the other individual within the limits of the country, who

could have so successfully achieved this happy event.

We are aware, sir, that treaty is not yet completed, but that an important act is yet necessary for its accomplishment. We anticipate no such result, and yet it may be that still further work may be necessary for the crowning of our hopes. You have brought skill and labor—and self-sacrifice too, to this great work, we know. And whatever may befall the country in this or any other matter, we are sure that you will be ready to sacrifice every thing for her good, save honor. And on that point amidst the perplexities of these perplexing times, we shall be at ease;—for we know that he who has so nobly maintained his country's honor, may safely be entrusted with his own.

And permit us, sir, most warmly to greet you as our personal friend and fellow-citizen. Though the few and brief intervals of leisure which your public duties have permitted you, have allowed us far less intercourse with you in private life than we have wished, we have never ceased to feel that you were one of us. We rejoice in the kind providence which has been with you in the past, and may Heaven still smile upon your future years. Long may you live to be an ornament and support of your native republic. And when at last your sun goes down,—as every orb, the brightest even must set,—may it be from a serene and tranquil sky. It was bright at its rising—it is brilliant at its meridian. May not clouds gather around its departing—but, life's labors done and honors won,—may it in your own classical and beautiful words, go down, with slow descending, long lingering light.

And now, Fellow-Citizens, it would be the illest ceremony in the world to presume to introduce to you our distinguished guest. It was his privilege, upon the occasion of an important trial in the Supreme Court of this Commonwealth, a few years since, to introduce to that Court and to the bar, the lamented William Wirt, his opposing counsel in the case. He did it by a just and beautiful tribute to his eminent talents and worth. It was the no less just and beautiful reply of Mr. Wirt, when he rose in turn to address the Court, that he had one reason to regret the very kind introduction which he had just received—for his friend, Mr. Webster, had thereby placed him under obligation, which it would never be in his power to return, for he never could meet that gentleman at any bar in the United States where his name and his fame had not gone before him.

And here, Fellow-Citizens, in Boston—here, in Faneuil Hall, last place of all—and amongst you, last people of all, is such a ceremony needed. I have only to say, that DANIEL WEBSTER, the faithful representative, the manly and able statesman, your fellow-citizen and friend, is before you, and I leave his name to do the rest.

The Mayor having retired from the platform, Mr. Webster turned to the assembly and bowed, whereupon a tremendous shout arose, and the storm of applause shook the old hall for many minutes. After it had subsided, Mr. Webster began to speak in a low tone, so that it was rather difficult to catch his words at first, but as he proceeded, his voice increased in boldness, and it soon swelled through the hall as it has heretofore been wont, hushing into almost breathless attention the eager thousands who bent forward to hear the words that fell from the orator's lips.

Mr. Webster spoke as follows:

I know not how it is, Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen, I know not how it is, but there is something, either in the echo of these walls, or in the sea of upturned faces, which I see before me, or in the genius which hovers over this place, fanning with its wings the feelings of every bosom into an ardent and patriotic glow—there is something which excites me strongly—deeply, too deeply, almost, for expression. I cannot but doubt that this salutation and greeting of my fellow-citizens is a tribute which I feel in my very heart. Boston is indeed my home—my cherished home! It is now more than twenty-five years since that I came here, to pursue in this enlightened metropolis those objects in professional and private life by which I designed to subsist and in which I was to find my happiness. It is about twenty years since I was invited to clothe myself with a public trust as the representative of its citizens; and it gives me infinite pleasure to see here to-day, among gentlemen of a more advanced period in life, not a few of those who were originally instrumental in inducing me to devote myself to the service of my country, and in which I was to find my duties of public life have withdrawn me from this my home, it has, nevertheless, been the attractive spot to which all my local affections tended; and now, when the progress of time will shortly bring about a period—even if it be not hastened by the course of events—when the duties of public life will yield to the repose befitting advanced years, I cherish no hope apart from living in your midst, partaking of your fortunes, whether for good or for evil, and leaving to those who bear my name an inheritance among you.

The Mayor has spoken very kindly, to you gentlemen, of my public conduct, especially in relation to the recent negotiation with England. I hope, fellow-citizens, something has been done which will be permanently useful, but I do not assume the merit. I have endeavored to do my duty, and though it caused me some hard work, I have not altogether unaverted to hard work; I have had some anxious days and sleepless nights, but if the results of my exertions shall be beneficial, my labors will be amply compensated; my other days will be happier, and my other nights of sweeter repose. My object was, if possible, to disperse the clouds which have been hovering over England and the United States—to determine questions which had existed for several years, and which, though not always threatening War, yet never assured us a feeling of permanent peace. Gentlemen, the lamented General Harrison was called to the chief magistracy of this nation, at his inauguration in 1841, he called me to the place I now occupy, and altho' it is very bad taste to speak of one's self, yet here, among friends and neighbors, (cheers) I wish to say a word or two on that subject. (Applause, and cries of "go on.")

With General Harrison I had contracted an acquaintance and friendship when we were both members of Congress; after that I saw him at his own house and elsewhere. I have made, and do make, no boast of the confidence it was his pleasure to repose in me, but circumstances hardly worth serious notice have rendered it not improper for me to say that, so soon as he was elected to the Presidency—and without one word from me upon the subject—he wrote to me, inviting me to fill a place in his Cabinet, leaving the choice of that place to myself—and requesting my advice as to whom he should ask to assume the remaining posts. At the same time he rather expressed a wish that I should go into the Treasury department, for he was pleased to say that he knew I had paid some attention to currency and finance, and could feel the wants and necessities of the country in those respects, which had been the moving causes of the revolution that had placed him in the Presidential chair. It so happened that my preference was for the place in the Cabinet which I now fill; I felt all its responsibility and knew all its labor, but I can say, truly and frankly, that what attracted me to the Treasury was the opportunity to currency and finance I may have given, I felt more competent to undertake the management of other concerns than the dai-

ly drudgery of the Treasury department. I was not insensible to the nature of the work before me, nor to the danger of a war with Great Britain. The cause of that immediate danger might not have been fully understood, but its apparent speedy outbreak was close at hand, and to the circumstances I will ask your attention for a moment.

In 1841 Alexander McLeod was arrested in this country. A year or two before, the British Government had authorized a military excursion into the territory of the United States, for the purpose of destroying a steamboat which, it was alleged, had conveyed assistance to the insurgents in Canada. The act was avowed by the British Government as a public act. Alexander McLeod, who deserves no regard or sympathy as an individual, happened to be an agent in the performance of the public act. He was arrested, was arrested in New York and held to trial for homicide, on account of it—according to my apprehension directly adverse to the well settled and well received doctrines of public law. With us, if a citizen of the United States, a military man, had received orders to pursue a certain object, which orders he must either obey or be hanged, and had afterwards been arrested, tried and convicted within the dominions of another power, and condemned to an ignominious punishment, would not he have a right to redress or vengeance. Any elevated Government, where a citizen was accused by another power, in consequence of obeying its orders, would say in the words of old, "adsum qui fecit"—I am responsible. A communication from the British Government upon this subject, reached the department a few days after the organization of the new Government of Great Britain. I do not think it requisite to speak of all that was said on that subject, but I will say, that it all which was known in Washington had been communicated to the whole country, the shipping interest, the navigation of the country, and of New England in particular; and all other interests connected with it, would have been depressed more than one-half.

That crisis I thought might be averted, first by upholding public law, and secondly by demanding an apology for whatever in the conduct of the other party had infringed that law, by putting ourselves right as to the first point, and insisting upon the second. When in England, in 1839, I had occasion to address a large association of her intelligent men; allusion was made to the condition of affairs, and I then stated what I thought and what I still think, that in case of a war between England and the United States, the only course would be to fight, either party would be found in the rectitude of her cause. With right on our side we are a match for England—with right on her side, she is a match for us, or any body. We live in an age which has called into being the exercise of judgment by a new, a great and an elevated tribunal—the public opinion of the world. Nations cannot now war upon each other without justifying themselves in the good judgment of mankind. The influence of civilization, of commerce, of the light of Christianity, is to restrain in the princes and people of the earth, the gratification of an inordinate ambition through the bloody zeal of war; and every settlement of national difficulties through reasonable negotiation is a new tribute to, and profit of, the benign influence of Christian faith.

Of the terms of this new treaty with Great Britain, it is somewhat awkward for me to speak, because I have not yet been authentically published; I am persuaded, however, that when the whole circumstances and provisions are carefully considered, it will be found at least, that there has been manifested a good disposition, not only to maintain the just rights, and uphold the honor of one side and the other, but a disposition to secure peace and to bring all questions to a happy and speedy conclusion. But while I gratefully receive the testimony of your approbation, I must not neglect to acknowledge the obligations of others, devolving upon me. And first I must bear witness to the intelligent and active attention of the President of the United States—to his sincere and anxious desire that the whole negotiation should be brought to an amicable conclusion. And I would acknowledge everywhere acknowledged obligations to him for the unknown and steady confidence he has reposed in me from the beginning. I need not say how infinitely improbable and hopeless it would be that a negotiator, dispirited, distrusted, treated with jealousy by his own Government, should succeed in a matter of this importance—for the cool, dispassionate, sagacious reasoner, and not yet the most powerful and proudest monarchies in Europe, possessing in the fullest extent the confidence of his Government in making a treaty, and fully authorized to bind it. I never can forget the frankness and generosity with which, after an interchange of a free and liberal interchange of opinion—he finally said to me that the business was in my hands, that upon my shoulders rested the responsibility, and on my decision depended the conclusion of the negotiation.

I desire also to acknowledge the cordial co-operation and aid of the gentlemen connected with all the other departments of the Government; and I would likewise say—a word I have already caused to be said in a more official manner—that the highest respect is due to the Commissioners of Maine and Massachusetts for their co-operation in securing the treaty, and for their faithful adherence to the interests of their own States, but the rights of the United States (applause). I hope I shall not trespass upon the propriety of the occasion if I speak of the happy selection made by Great Britain in the person of Lord Ashburton, a thorough Englishman—doubtless well understanding and always pursuing the objects of his own Government, of cultivated and liberal views, fully acquainted with the relations of the two countries, and always heretofore acting favorably towards the Government of the United States—he came out under the strong probability that whatever he agreed to would meet the approval of his country. And sure we are that we shall find his work approved at home, and he, being the instrument of an arrangement which will not only secure the honor and the earnest interest of all—will consider that he has achieved the greatest labor of all his life (applause).

Aside from the boundary question there are others of moment. The correspondence will show that there are important interests not concluded by this negotiation, and when it shall be laid before the people and read by them, I shall look to their judgment with faith and trust—to that judgment by which we must stand or fall.

There yet remain several subjects unsettled between England and the United States. And first—the Colonial trade with the West Indies and the Eastern provinces. It has been my duty to look into this question; to keep the run of it from 1829 till now. And I am constrained to believe—I have the misfortune to know—that the operation of the present laws is highly unfavorable to the shipping interest, the navigation of the whole country, and particularly of New England. This is an important subject, either for the protection of the action of Congress—and one branch, the House of Representatives, has already appointed a committee, which has reported upon the operation of the existing laws—a subject which I hold to be vitally important to the prosperity of the country.

Another question, somewhat more important than this is the adjustment of the boundary of the territory of the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean, and there are powerful reasons why this should be settled before that country is peopled. And on several other States many American citizens have claims, for injuries encountered at their hands, and it becomes the Government of the United States, by a calm, dignified,

vigorous, and decisive tone of conduct, to ensure prompt justice to them in these respects. (Cheers)

Gentlemen, I am here to-day as a guest. I was invited by a number of highly valued personal and political friends to partake of a public dinner, for the purpose of giving them an opportunity to pass the usual greeting between friends, after a somewhat extended absence, and to exchange with me congratulations upon the result of the treaty negotiations. It was at my instance, gentlemen, that the assembly took the form it did; and instead of seeing them at the festive board, I now meet them and you in this place. Still, the occasion is the same; I am still here as a guest, to receive your greeting upon particular subjects. I am not here with any invitation to address you, or expectation that I should address you upon topics not suggested by previous observations. It would not be befitting the occasion, in my opinion, were I to use the occasion for any such purpose; because, though I desire, and at no very distant day hope, to have an opportunity of making known my sentiments on the country and of particular matters in the country, I know very well that I should be trespassing upon the bounds of politeness, were I to do so now. Some gentlemen who have invited me here, entertain opinions different from mine, and they would very properly say, "we met Mr. Webster to exchange congratulations with him upon matters on which we all agree, and not for the purpose of his using the occasion to speak of things on which we do not agree." On that account I have good reason to forbear from stating how far I am enabled to agree with my friends of many years standing, and how far I am reluctantly constrained to differ from their views, and for leaving to some other occasion the fulfillment of my intention in this respect.

There is one thing, however, on which I will speak. The Mayor has been kind enough to say that in his judgment—having performed my duties to the satisfaction of the country, it might be left to me to take care of my own honor and reputation. (Cheers.) I suppose he meant to say that in the present distraction of the Whig party, and the contrary of opinion—if such contrary there be—as to the course which it is proper for me to pursue, the decision of that question might very well be left to myself. Gentlemen, I am exactly of his meaning. (Laughter and cheering.) I am quite of opinion, gentlemen, that as to the question touching my own honor, and the consistency of my own character, as I am conscious of the honor of the Whig party, it has much better be left to me to decide. (Applause.) And although no man more highly values the opinion of his friends than I do that of those around me, upon a question of such delicacy and importance as this, I choose to decide for myself. (Cheers.) And upon this subject I shall leave you as enlightened as I found you—I will give no pledge—no intimation as to my conduct one way or the other. I will be as absolutely free when this day closes, as to my action one way or another, as I was when the day dawned.

Gentlemen, there is a delicacy in this case, because there is always a delicacy and regret in cases where a public man feels obliged to dissent from his friends in opinion; but there is no embarrassment—no embarrassment. If I see the path of duty before me, I have no scruple within confidence in men, but it is equally true that I will throw all embarrassment and hesitation to the winds;—a public man has no occasion to be embarrassed. Personally, he is nothing—his country is everything; he must shake off all personal considerations, look only to his duty and the good of his country—abandoning at once all those selfish motives, which, according as they are consulted or disregarded, mark him as a great or as a little man. (Great cheering.)

Fellow-citizens, there are many individuals who have done great fault with my remaining in the President's cabinet since 1841, and it is known to all that twenty years of honest and distinguished service in the Whig cause, did not suffice to exempt me from an outpouring such as has seldom been directed against any one. I am a little hard to coax, and a good deal harder to be driven, (laughter). I shall choose my own ground. (Cheering.) And thinking you for a cordial support, when I have achieved, and I would rather hold on to what I have already secured than run any risk for new acquisitions in political distinctions, or new stations in public life. (Applause.)

I suppose, gentlemen, that I ought to stop here—(cries of "no; no; go on; go on;") but there is a topic to which I will allude, yet no further than as it in some degree concerns myself. There was a very respectable—most respectable assembly of Whig gentlemen held some days since in this place, and they passed several important resolutions. There is no set of gentlemen in the Commonwealth for whom so far as I know them—I have more respect. They are Whigs—but they are no better Whigs than I; they have served in the Whig ranks—so have I, as long, perhaps, though I may be with less ability and success. They were sent here, as I supposed, by the great body of Whigs in Massachusetts, to make nominations for Governor and Lieutenant Governor of the Commonwealth; if they had any commission beyond that it was not published. If they had any authority of any other purport, I was not acquainted with it. But after making these nominations, it seemed to those gentlemen, that they were incensed a little, and I do not think they declared, in one of their resolutions, a full complete and final separation from the President, on behalf of the Whigs. Now if these gentlemen saw fit to express their own sentiments, no one can blame them for that. They had a perfect right so to do—a true Whig always expresses his sentiments wherever he is. But it is quite another question whether they shall assume to be representatives of all the Whigs, and to speak in their names in matters which had not been entrusted to them by the Whigs. I am a Whig—I always have been a Whig—I always will be a Whig; and if any one undertakes to turn me out of the pale of the Whig party—let us see who will get out first. I am a Massachusetts Whig, and a whole Whig. I have battled with them for twenty-five years, and so long as God lets me live, I will stand with them. And as a Massachusetts Whig I have been accustomed to submit my wishes in some measure to the decision of the whole Whig party through its accredited representatives, and to strive after the public good with them. But it is quite another question how they shall undertake to bind me in matters which I have not agreed to submit to their arbitration.

"A full and final separation from the President." Such is the text, and it requires commentary. Now what is that commentary?—We have a President who is to hold his office for nearly three years to come. Does this resolution mean that all the measures of the President's administration are to be opposed by the Whigs of Massachusetts, right or wrong? There are great interests which require the attention of Government, and if the President, by diplomacy or otherwise, the action of Congress, shall make an effort to promote them—to benefit our navigation, for instance, or secure the Colonial trade—are we all to separate from him in this? (Cries of "No.") I say no, too. If he directs a review of the whole commercial diplomacy of the United States, with respect to direct and reciprocal trade, which so deeply concerns our prosperity, and which is now so much sacrificed to other powers—are we to separate from him in this, and to lead the opposing forces against him? I say no, again. Gentlemen, look at this great question.

Are you aware—and I see some are—how great a proportion, more than one half, of the carrying

trade between Brazil and the United States, is performed by tonnage belonging to the north of Europe, in consequence of the ill-considered, disadventurous arrangements which have been entered into and are now in force? Whig gentlemen, as well might foreign powers demand our own coasting trade, and as well might they yield it. There is not the shadow of reason in the present law—not the shadow, and I appeal to those who know to bear me out in this speaking. Am I not right? (Mr. Webster with these words turned to Benjamin Rich, Esq. an old and experienced merchant, who was near him, and addressed the inquiry immediately to him. Mr. Rich answered emphatically "yes." Mr. Webster continued.) Well, fellow-citizens, is every measure which may be proposed to remedy this state of things, to be postponed or rejected? Are we to wait for three years before doing anything—and after that, as many more until Providence shall see fit to bless us with more power of doing good than we now possess? Applause.

Again, there are now in various departments connected with the administration of the Government, many persons employed who are supposed to be good Whigs. In office the under President are several collectors, marshals, district attorneys, and others. What is to become of them in this separation? Are they expected to resign, or is it the intention of these gentlemen to give provocation for them to be turned out? Our distinguished fellow-citizen who so ably represents this country in England—is he to come home on account of this separation of the Whigs from the President, and leave his office to his predecessor or some other person of that stamp?—and even the humble individual who now addresses you; where do these our brother Whigs mean to place him? In cases of divorce it is usual to divide the children, and I should be very glad to know where I am to go! (Great applause.)

I would not treat this matter too lightly, nor yet with undue sincerity. I know that in public meetings of this kind, resolutions are never considered with any great degree of deliberation—they are reported and passed as they are presented. I know not who drew the resolutions to which I allude, and I doubt if they had much meaning. The gentlemen who drew them, probably were angry and resentful; and brought in a string of charges against the President; a kind of bill of indictment; and announced a full and final separation between him and the Whigs of Massachusetts. This step has a bearing—intentional or unintentional—upon my own position, and it is therefore proper that I should take notice of it. There are some of my Whig friends from whom I differ. They are honest, doubtless, and have a perfect right to express their sentiments. I have also the right to express my opinions, if they be honest, and I must openly dissent from the disposition which seems to be entertained to postpone all attempts to do good for the country till a future and uncertain period.

We have now a strong majority in both Houses of Congress, and my opinion decidedly is, that now is the time for us to accomplish what remains to be accomplished. There are persons of more sanguine temperament than I. "Confidence," it was said by Burke, "is a plant of slow growth in old bosoms." The remark was intended to refer to confidence in men, but it is equally true that it should be to measures and events. There are men who see more power for the Whigs. Their vision extends far along into the future, and they behold nothing but mild skies and halcyon seas beyond the fogs and darkness and clouds which now obscure the sun. But gentlemen, it was not an easy work to accomplish the attainment of Whig power. For many years the Whigs were struggling, and in 1841, men from the extreme of all are men, the ultra State-rights man and the ultra Federalist, the warm tariff and the equally warm anti-tariff man—all came together in a spirit of conciliation, of harmony, of union; they sought to agree, to heal differences instead of widening them; to act in concert to save the country from the ruinous consequences of the measures which had been pursued by the previous administration. The whole policy of that administration, was proclaimed a spirit of kindness, of conciliation, of friendship, of harmony, and of union.

Gentlemen, if I understand the nature of the four or five great objects for which that revolution was undertaken, they were—first, to establish a permanent peace between the United States and England; for although we had no war, the disputed questions between the two powers had long been in a state of perpetual agitation which disturbed the country for half as much as a war could have done. They broke in upon all business—they rendered the people incapable of judging of the future, or of calculating with probability the event of any enterprise. A remedy for this was sought for, and it could only be found in the conclusion of a stable peace. That was one object and I shall be glad if you think it has been accomplished. But the second great object was to provide a revenue—a thing in which the country was greatly deficient. It was notorious that the late administration had much exceeded in expenditures the receipts of the Government—that the Republic was in debt—that the compromise act was daily diminishing the revenue—and that it was necessary to provide for its increase. That end I hope, and believe, has to a reasonable extent been attained.

The subject of currency has been the study of my life. Thirty years ago, the question of all bearings, the relation of paper to specie and all circumstances, was discussed in the Parliament of England by the brightest intellects in Britain.—The famous resolution of Mr. Vansittart, declaring that a bank note was always worth as much as it bore upon its face, and insisting that it was not the bank note that had depreciated, but the bullion that had risen, was debated. That side was espoused, as you know, by Lord Liverpool, Lord Castlereagh, Mr. Rhodes and other eminent individuals, while on the other side was the powerful logic of Brougham, and the acute good sense of Baring—now Lord Ashburton.

The result of that discussion made me a bullionist, and I was thoroughly convinced that paper cannot safely be circulated any longer than when it is immediately redeemable at the counter whence it is issued. Coming shortly afterwards into Congress, I bestowed myself to the consideration of the question, and I believe I have since read every thing on the subject that is valuable; I have also been a close observer of paper currency in this country, from the time of the first United States bank till now. I have sometimes expressed opinions which have not been altogether falsified by subsequent public events—and I stand from all these things, therefore, permitted to entertain as much confidence in my own judgment, as in a common newspaper paragraph, or the hasty words of a caucus orator.

Fellow-citizens, this Exchequer plan which was sent to Congress was not only the best, but the only measure which could have been projected for the relief of the country in its financial distress. And I will stake my reputation—which is all I have to stake, and I give present Whig Congress will adopt it, and give a fair trial, in three years it will be universally admitted to be the most beneficial ever established—the Constitution alone excepted.—(Cheers.) Understand, gentlemen, that I mean if taken as it came from the Cabinet, and not as it looked after it had passed through the hands of a committee of Congress, for they struck out of the provision for dealing in exchange, and then it was not worth a rush, not worth the very parchment on which it would have been engrossed, had it passed.

The urgent want, and the pressing necessity of this country, is a common currency and a sound system of exchange, (cheers.) You work for Alabama and Louisiana, and they plant for you. You both want an equal credit throughout the country—you want your money there, and they want their money here, worth as much as at home, save only the mere expense of transmitting a draft. This equal currency you cannot get, except through the authority of the general Government—you never will have it but

of that—measure! I must now speak openly and frankly. My turn to speak has come, and I say that no measure was ever passed which caused me so much grief and mortification as that compromise act. It was carried by a few friends who united with the whole host of enemies. Their motives have been much lauded, and if by motives are meant the personal motives which actuated them, they undoubtedly were pure. All public men are supposed always to act from pure motives. But if the objects of the law—or the law itself—if these be motives for its passage, then I say that the motives of its passage were worse than the operation of the law itself.

Every line of the act is full of error. It was neither more nor less than an attempted imposition upon Congress for all future time, of a restriction which the Constitution had not imposed; it was a new prohibitory clause declaring that after 1842 no duties should be laid except according to an absurd horizontal system, and then not above twenty per cent. The measure was warmly pressed and passed, and many since became reconciled to it; but I say that I said then, that the doctrine was false and dangerous; it was a new principle in law, which I foresaw would in after time convulse our system and cost the country a spasm and a mighty throes to get rid of. And has it not done all this! (applause) I thank God we have got rid of it, and that at the present time protection is recognized as a distinct principle.—And I hope it will ever be so (applause).

But I come now to the greatest original object of the revolution of 1840—the restoration of the currency. Our troubles did not begin with the recent want of money in the Treasury, but with the dishonor of the Treasury in 1838, and those troubles have continued ever since from that & other causes. For some of these other causes provision has partly been made, but for this great, original cause, no provision has been made, and were it not for the passage of the new tariff law, the Treasury would have been wholly without resource, except the fluctuating and wholly unreliable proceeds of the public lands. And yet until a better currency, a currency which shall be universal throughout the country is provided, I am hard to be persuaded that we shall see the day of our former prosperity.

I will say but few words upon the efforts of the present administration to provide such a currency. At the special session of Congress the distinguished gentleman at the head of the Treasury department, furnished to Congress the idea of a large bank of deposit and exchange, with branches in the principal cities of the Union. I need hardly advert to the circumstances under which it was presented. It had received the approbation of the President and the Cabinet, as the best thing that could be devised, for as you well know circumstances had been such as to prevent the election. It had pleased Providence to put in the first office of the government one whom we had placed in the second, and whom we considered competent for that station. His principles on the question of a general bank were fixed and known, and it was therefore the part of wisdom in us to see how to get along as well as we might. It was exceedingly doubtful whether if a bill passed to charter a private subscription bank, the stock could have been taken up. We had ascertained this from the best informed individuals of the larger cities, and when this plan was submitted to their consideration, though they expressed fears to the contrary, they entertained some hopes that it might be established.

The bill did not allow branches of the institution to be located in any State without the consent of that State Government, and though I thought, and others thought, such a provision wholly inadvisable, it was inserted in compliance with the views of those who maintained that the omission to exercise such a power, amounted to its renunciation; I had no such idea, or that the consent of the States was necessary. But the plan was drafted to meet the views of those whose action and scrutiny it was to undergo, and as the administration was new and popular, it was desirable to provide something as acceptable and perfect as possible. It was at last rejected. It was brought in, and after a discussion of six weeks it was found that it could not even pass a Whig Senate. I need not pursue the unhappy narrative—Men were angry and resentful. I saw the storm, and had endeavored, so far as was in my power, to avert it. My advice was to forbear—to delay—to give people time to cool, and to the two Senators from this State, as has already been made known to the public, I earnestly expressed this opinion. I am bound to believe the advice was not good; certainly it was not at all followed—and the consequences have been what I supposed, and what all have seen.

This brought us to the commencement of the last session. The Secretary of the Treasury then communicated to the President the plan of an Exchequer. It was sent to Congress where it received very little notice, and was necessary for me, on others, to say that the measure met my honest and entire approval. I hope I have not been in the habit of manifesting an overweening confidence in my own judgment, or an unreasonable aversion towards taking the advice of friends.—But there are some subjects upon which I must be allowed to have and to hold my own opinions. The subject of currency has been the study of my life. Thirty years ago, the question of all bearings, the relation of paper to specie and all circumstances, was discussed in the Parliament of England by the brightest intellects in Britain.—The famous resolution of Mr. Vansittart, declaring that a bank note was always worth as much as it bore upon its face, and insisting that it was not the bank note that had depreciated, but the bullion that had risen, was debated. That side was espoused, as you know, by Lord Liverpool, Lord Castlereagh, Mr. Rhodes and other eminent individuals, while on the other side was the powerful logic of Brougham, and the acute good sense of Baring—now Lord Ashburton.

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THE PHILANTHROPIST.

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Your friend and brother,
GERRIT SMITH.

EDITED BY G. BAILEY, JR.

CINCINNATI.

Mr. Smith's Letter.

marks on this letter must
character of the Liberty

I published Dr. Brisbane's article, concerning the address, but not the reply to it by Mr. Smith. The former was a communication, the

sons of my opinion. First, it is necessary previous to every election to get up a crisis—secondly,

know of these facts. You will then stand only chargeable with preferring a most false, malignant

of the Speakers, there would have been a peaceable way of redressing the wrong. Laws for restricting the State congressionally, are not unal-

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